GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:875
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2001
WHEAT EXPORTS TO IRAQ
KAMAL NATH

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two Indian wheat shipments that were rejected by Iraq were later certified to be fit for an International agency in Dubai and sold there;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter;

(c) whether a high level delegation from India met Iraqi officials to find the reasons behind the rejection of the shipment;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof;

(e) whether subsequent shipments were accepted by Iraqi authorities; and

(f) if so, the total shipment made so far?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHAUHAN)

(a)&(b): As per the report of the Indian delegation to Iraq (May 17-22,2001), the firsttwo consignments of Indian wheat (total quantity 0.23 lakhs tons) rejected by Iraq, have been reportedly sold by the exporter, M/s Vishal Exports, to National Flour Mills Company, Dubai.

(c)&(d): An official delegation visited Iraq for an on the spot assessment from 17th to 22nd May, 2001 and held discussions with the Iraqi authorities at various levels. The delegation has reported that Iraq wants to have wheat that should be totally free from inorganic matter i.e. sand, dust and also live insects. As per the International CODEX standards, foreign matter in the grain is permissible upto 2% out of which 1.5% consists of organic matter, such as, chaff, weed seeds, other edible and non-edible grains, etc. and the balance (0.5%) inorganic foreign matter, such as, stones, dust, etc. Quality Specifications prescribed in the Iraqi contract provided for the presence of foreign matter upto maximum 2%. The Inspection Agency agreed by the Grain Board of Iraq had inspected the Cargo prior to shipment and declared the wheat consignment fit for human consumption and conforming to the quality specifications of Iraqi order. However, on arrival of the consignments at Iraqi ports, the Grain Board of Iraq insisted on `nil` tolerance for inorganic foreign matter. The Indian delegation that visited Iraq in May, 2001 was informed by Iraqi Authorities that, according to their definition, they do not count sand particles under foreign matter. In other words, only organic foreign matter (like chaff glumes, wee seeds and other edible and inedible grains) are taken in this category. The Exporters were not aware of this stipulation. They presumed that, as in the CODEX Standards, the 2% foreign matter would include upto 0.5% inorganic matter.The delegation was further informed that the Iraqi flour mills were not having adequate facilities for separation of inorganic matter because of the problem of spare parts required for maintenance of such machines owing to UN sanctions. The delegation was told that the Iraqi authorities had accordingly taken a decision to reject any wheat stocks found with inorganic matter like sand, stones, etc. The delegation was further informed that Iraq had also rejected the wheat sourced from various other countries on the same ground.

(e)&(f): No, Sir. Iraq has rejected four shipments made by three exporters from India.